

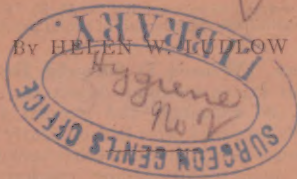
HAMPTON TRACTS

FOR THE PEOPLE

SANITARY SERIES . . . No. I.

The Health Laws of Moses

BY HELEN W. HULLOW



NEW YORK

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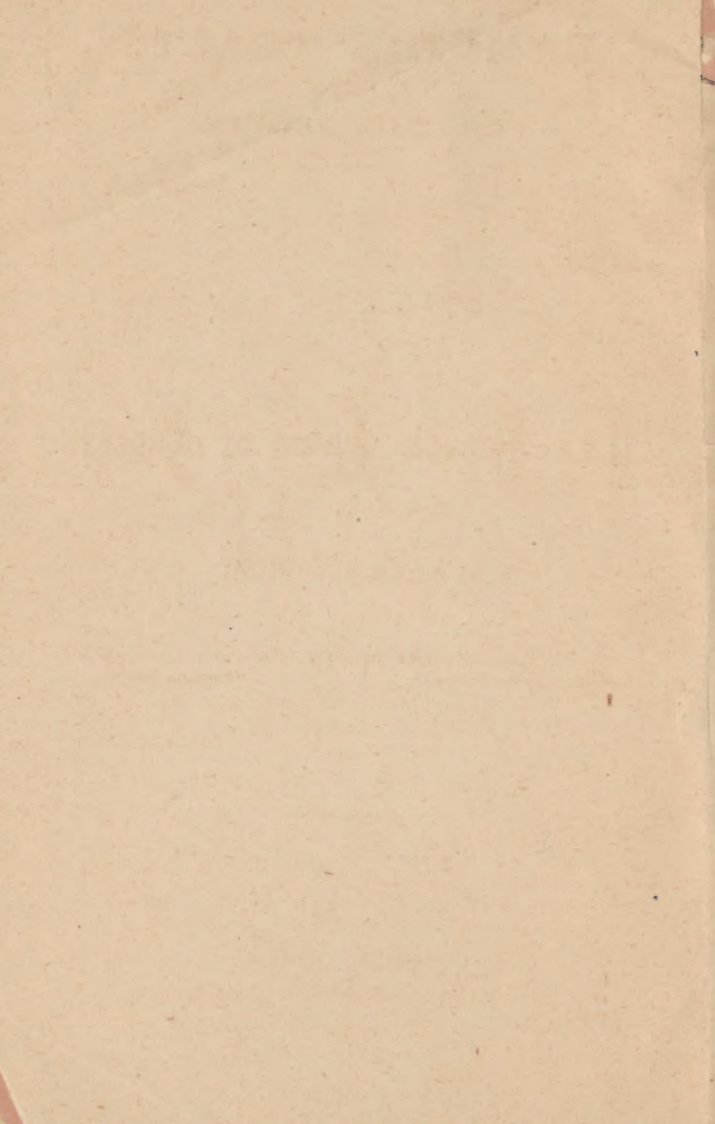
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The Health Laws of Moses,

By HELEN W. LUDLOW.

“Lord, have mercy upon us, and write all these thy laws in our hearts, we beseech thee.”
Common Prayer.

HAMPTON, VIRGINIA:

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THE HEALTH LAWS OF MOSES.

Perhaps most people who read the Ten Commandments, and know them by heart, have no idea of the fact that the children of Israel received from Moses at least ten other commandments as binding upon them and upon us, because as truly the laws of God in Nature, as those which were written upon the two tables of stone.

Some people wonder why there were not more than ten commandments. Why was not slavery forbidden? Why was not intemperance forbidden? Perhaps it was in answer to questions like these that Paul wrote to the Romans,* "And if there be any other commandment it is briefly comprehended in this saying" (of Moses†) "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." But the rest of the laws of Moses, most people perhaps are accustomed to think of as mere "ceremonial laws," types and symbols, oppressive to observe, and joyfully swept away when the gospel of Christ, which they somehow foreshadowed, appeared in its gladness. This is partly true, no doubt, but a more careful reading of the history of the Israelites' wanderings under the guidance of their great general, Moses, reveals some remarkable facts concerning his administration.

* Romans xiii; 9. † Leviticus xix: 18.

It is certainly a curious thing, worthy the notice of every student of the progress of the human race, whether his standpoint be religious or purely scientific, that the moving camp in the wilderness was governed by as strict and perfect a sanitary code as any sanitary commission could now devise. The friends of social science are making great efforts to spread among the people a knowledge and appreciation of the laws of health, so little understood, so widely neglected, yet here we find that they are as old as Moses.

We have a natural reverence for the voice of antiquity, the counsels of the fathers; sometimes an exaggerated reverence, for the world is really older now than it ever has been before, of course, and the wise men of old would have been far from desiring or imagining that their descendants would not improve upon their ideas in hundreds of years. But when we find a set of laws of living uttered three thousand years ago, which thirty centuries have only developed in operation, and which the latest modern science can only reiterate and reinforce, we must indeed feel that they are the embodied wisdom of ages, the wisdom of nature, the laws of God. As such, they demand the careful study of every intelligent person, rich or poor, of great or little education, and of every nationality—every one who desires length of days, and health of body, and the advancement of the race.

The freedmen of the Southern States are very fond of comparing themselves to the children of Israel, and tracing the parallel, which is indeed striking in some respects, between their own captivity, "way down in Egypt's land," and happy Exodus, with the history of the chosen people of God. I ask them, therefore, to remember that after passing through the Red Sea of deliverance, the children of Israel yet had forty years of wan-

dering in the wilderness between them and the Promised Land, and to give especial heed to the laws which Moses gave to guide that wandering, and which might have shortened it much if they had been obeyed.

Sublime is the story of Sinai burning and thundering, the vast hosts waiting in the plain below, while Moses talked alone with the great Law-giver in the cloud on the mountain top, receiving from Him not only the tables of stone, but minute directions for his daily guidance and care of the helpless hordes depending upon him, the health laws for their bodies as well as their souls.

What were these Health Laws of Moses, and what are they to us ?

The more we know of the science of living, and the conditions of health and disease, the more plainly we see the perfection of the sanitary regulations which governed the great camp of the wandering Israelites. To be sure, they had a good start. David says, "There was not one feeble person among their tribes." * That shows that, in spite of the oppression of the last Pharaoh under whom they served, they had been, on the whole, well cared for physically, and their simple out-door life and work as herdsmen had been good for them. But now that they had set out in the world for themselves, unaccustomed to the use of liberty, and unlearned in all the learning of the Egyptians, the case was very different, and the only safety for them was in the strictest of sanitary laws most strictly enforced.

These are no less valuable now than then. Let us see what they were, and whether we are observing them. You will find them scattered through the books of Exodus, Leviticus and Deuteronomy. They were read often in the hearing of the people.

*Psalm cv: 37.

The first of the Health Laws of Moses was

BE CLEAN.

First in time, and first in importance; most comprehensive, and made the symbol, as it ever must be, of that purity of soul without which no man shall see the Lord. Why, even before the people were allowed to draw near to listen to the ten commandments, Moses was directed to tell them to purify themselves and wash their garments. * Just as, long before, when Jacob wished to make a thank offering to God who had been with him in his wanderings and brought him to his father's house in peace, he commanded all his household, "Be clean, and change your garments, and we will go up to Bethel, and make an altar unto God."†

Again and again is this law of Moses repeated, and modern science finds no more important health law than it is. How much it was made to include:—cleanness of person,‡ of clothes, of personal habits, of houses, of the whole camp, of the food they ate, and the air they breathed.

Look over that list and see how far you live up to it.

BE CLEAN IN YOUR PERSON.

I once knew a young lady who offered to prepare a confirmation dress for a little girl in the city of New York. Her mother was too poor to give her a new white muslin dress, such as the other children had, and the child very gladly went to be measured for her new frock. But the lady was forced to stop and ask, "Sallie, when did your mother give you a bath last?"

"She never gave me no bath, ma'am."

* Exodus xix: 10. † Gen. xxxv: 2, 3.

‡ Exodus xxx: 18-21. Leviticus v: 2, 3. Lev. xvi: 28. Lev. xvii: 15. Lev. xxii: 4-6. Numb. viii: 5-7. Numb. xix: 9-22.

“ Well, when did you wash yourself all over ? ”

“ Never did, ma’am,” and the lady could well believe it. The poor mother said she thought it would make Sallie sick to wash her all over. She did not know that a clean, sweet body was a better dress for Sallie’s young soul on her confirmation day, than any white muslin and ribbons.

The Israelites were better taught. They had abundant provisions for bathing, and were required to use them very frequently. For the priests and Levites especially, as soon as the tabernacle was made for the church in the wilderness, great “ lavers ” and “ seas,” which were simply bathing tanks, were set up, that they might purify themselves before worshiping the Lord, and thus be examples to all the people.

Then how much more should we, who stand in the light which all these centuries have been gradually pouring upon the subject of health, and the importance of cleanness, be careful to keep clean these bodies which are “ the temples of God.” *

Let us see what is known on this subject.

If you should look at your skin through a powerful magnifying glass, you would see that it is filled with little holes, so very small that twenty-eight hundred of them exist in a space of a square inch, and therefore, a grown man of ordinary size has as many as seven million in the skin of his whole body. It is through these little holes, or pores as they are called, that the perspiration flows when you are heated. But not only when you are heated ; it is passing off constantly, though in such comparatively small quantities that it is scarcely felt. Yet even by this insensible, or unfelt perspiration, it is estimated that two pints of matter pass out of our bodies in twenty-four hours.

* 1 Cor. iii: 16, 17. vi: 19.

What is this matter ? It is the dead waste of the body, no more fit to be kept in it than any other of its waste substances. Now if these little drain pipes, these safety valves of the body, be choked and stopped up with dirt, there will be no outlet of this waste ; and what becomes of it ? It is forced back into the system, and is absorbed into the blood, and poisons all the organs of life. It must be coughed up from the lungs, or break out in unsightly blotches, or inflame and distress the digestive organs, or press upon the nerves and cause that most trying of pains, neuralgia, or rheumatism.

If it is a young child that thus suffers, his weak little frame is very likely to yield to the poison, and he dies. Sponge off his shriveled, feverish limbs with clean water and soap, and put him, in a warm clean gown, into a clean bed, and see how quieted and comforted he will be. Thousands of dear little babies die every year from dirt. Is not this a sad and terrible fact ?

BE CLEAN IN YOUR GARMENTS.*

This naturally follows cleanness of person. When you feel the luxury of a clean skin, you will shrink from covering it with a dirty shirt. It is not the outward stain of work that matters so much. A mud spot on the coat is unsightly, but foul underclothing is unwholesome. When the waste of the body escapes through the pores of the skin, where does it go ? From those parts that are covered, it is, of course, taken up by the clothes. This is evident enough in the case of sensible perspiration. It is no less true of the insensible. No underclothing should be worn more than a week without a thorough washing, and that which is worn all day should never be worn at night. Why not ? Because you don't want to poison yourself. The little pores of the skin can take in as well as give

*Lev. vi: 10, 11. Lev. xvi: 27, 28. Lev. xvii: 15. Numb. xix: 9, 10.

out. The body throws off the waste matter because it wants to get rid of it, not to be confined in it still.

There was a story among the old Greeks, that the strongest man in the world, Hercules, who had strangled serpents in his cradle, was slain at last by a poisoned shirt sent him by a treacherous friend. What the shirt of Nessus was to Hercules, dirty shirts are to many a strong man in our day.

I knew a lady, threatened with lung disease, whose physician directed her to put on fresh under flannels every morning. This was accomplished very easily, without extra expense, by having the garment worn one day airing in the sun all the next, and twice or three times a week washed and thoroughly dried. She found, as the doctor had promised, that it made a wonderful difference in the ease of breathing.

If you were to walk in the morning through the streets of one of the handsomest cities in Germany, you would be amused to see the rows of open windows with bed-clothes hanging out of them; bright blue, and yellow and red patch-work quilts and comfortables, blankets, sheets, fat pillows, and even feather beds and straw beds, pushed half way out, airing and sunning all a long morning. You would laugh, but, after all, the sturdy, rosy-cheeked owners of the bed-clothes have most right to laugh, when they creep into those clean, wholesome beds at night, to sleep the sound sleep of health.

Does it not sound inviting? Wouldn't you like such a bed? Yet how many of you jump out of bed in the morning without even turning back the bed-clothes, and hurry to spread them up without shaking, as soon as you are dressed perhaps, thus, day after day, shutting in all the foul vapors that have passed off from the skin night after night. Often, a little delicate child is put into a bed like this, soaked with the poisonous waste not only

of his own body, but of one or two grown persons'. This is a disagreeable subject to dwell upon, but not half so disgusting as the reality. Do you sleep on such a bed as this? If you do, and if you think you would like to try the other plan, let me tell you what to do.

Have a good "clarin' up time," as Aunt Dinah would say, to begin with. Wash your blankets and bed-quilts as well as your sheets and pillow cases, and dry them thoroughly in the sun. Take your straw-bed to pieces, let the boys make a bonfire of the old straw; wash the ticking, and, when it is thoroughly aired and dry, fill it with clean, sweet straw. Feathers can be washed, and dried in a sunny room, and they will be as springy as ever, but I hope that you do not sleep on a feather bed. Straw is much more easily kept clean, not heating and weakening as feathers are. Take your bedstead to pieces, scrub it with cold soap suds, and air it in the sun. Then make up your bed, and your sleep will be sweet enough to pay for your labor. To-morrow morning, try the German plan of airing your beds and bedding, for you do not want to lose the good results of your work. Quilts and blankets should be washed twice a year, which will be sufficient if they are aired daily, and if the sheets are washed, as they should be, once a week and daily aired.

When you take your bedstead to pieces, I am afraid you may find a great deal of dust and dirt, beneath and behind it. And this brings us to another regulation of Moses in regard to cleanness.

BE CLEAN IN YOUR HOUSES.*

He required all the tents and houses to be kept from defilement. Is your house clean? Under the beds, I mean, and in the corners, and behind the wardrobes, and on top of the cupboards, and in the closets.

A servant girl who thought she had "got religion" was asked why she thought so, and she replied, "Because now I sweep out the corners." There seems, indeed, to be something in the honest purpose to live a good true life, which makes one hate uncleanness, as well that which is hidden as that which is seen—in the corners of the house and the corners of the heart. Moses said, "Whatsoever uncleanness a man shall be defiled withall, and it be hid from him, when he *knoweth* it, he shall be guilty."* Ignorance may excuse for a time, though it does not save from sickness or death, but when you know you are unclean, you have the responsibility upon you, and are guilty unless you clean yourselves.

Do you say, "But I am strong and well, though I am not so particular"? My friend, look about you a little, and look a little deeper. Do you live in a city? Look up the death rate. Where do the fevers, and choleras and diphtherias begin, and carry off most victims? In the broad, airy, clean streets, or the narrow, close, dirty ones; in the airy, well-kept houses of the educated classes, or the swarming, suffocating tenements? Do you say, "Well, once I knew of fever breaking out up town when there wasn't any in our ward"? Did you see the reports of the Sanitary Commission upon the state of a sewer pipe cut off in sinking a railroad, or a natural drainage choked by the ignorance of street surveyors and house builders? Or did you, perhaps, drive one of the carts that helped fill up the sunken lots with garbage instead of clean earth, putting money into the pockets of street contractors and coffins into the cemeteries?

But do you say, still more bitterly, "It is the curse of poverty then. The rich can afford to be healthy,

* Lev. v: 2, 3.

the poor man must die"? Try a little soap and water, and sunshine and air, before you come to that sad conclusion. There is no immunity for the rich, I can assure you, in their riches. A few years ago, the son of Queen Victoria, the Prince of Wales, heir to the throne of Great Britain and India, lay for weeks at the point of death in the palace of one of the first noblemen of England. Telegrams flashed back and forth under the seas, and all the civilized world sympathized with the widowed Queen mother and the anxious nation. And all because of a foul sewer pipe in the beautiful palace of an Earl.

Are your homes and your neighbors' homes as clean as you could make them, poor as you are? If all that won't suffice, then try a little law. If the house you live in is badly drained, and foul from any cause you cannot reach yourself, and your landlord refuses to remedy it, report to the Sanitary Commission, the Board of Health, and you will have the satisfaction of seeing the nuisance inspected, and your landlord obliged to abate it. That is what the rich have done for you; devised for you this protection. And well they may, for their interests are bound up with yours in this matter. The pestilence that begins in the tenement house does not always end there, or until it ravages the whole city. But the trouble is not want of a remedy, half so much as want of knowledge and care to use it.

Do you live in the country? You are to be congratulated then. You have more room to breathe in, fewer causes of decay and disease about you. But even here, you will need to remember the laws of Moses. You know well enough that fevers are not confined entirely to the city, but perhaps you do not fully know the causes of them. From the undrained marshes, the stagnant ponds, the reeking ditches, the dirty cellars, rises the ma-

laria which produces all the forms of intermittent fever and chills, and malarious dysentery and diarrhœa. Malaria is only the Italian name for bad air, and it is a pity we had not kept the English word for it, that it may look as ugly as it is. It may be a new idea to some of you that air can be dirty as well as clothes or food, but dirty air is the most frequent of all the causes of disease. We breathe air constantly into our lungs. Its work there is to purify the blood, If it is itself impure, it poisons instead of cleanses.

KEEP THE AIR CLEAN.*

The Health Laws of Moses were very strict on this point. Everything that could taint the air must be immediately carried outside the camp, and burned or buried. Do you ask how the air can be thus poisoned? Did you ever notice how, when a bright sunbeam falls across a room, you can see at once numberless specks of floating dust which you had not perceived before? The light of science, falling upon the air too many of us breathe, shows us, through the microscope, that it is loaded with more minute but still more numberless particles which, when collected and examined, are found to consist of vegetable and animal matter in a high state of decay. So deadly poisonous is this matter that a few drops containing it, injected into the jugular vein of a dog, has actually thrown him into a violent fever, corresponding in all the symptoms to yellow fever, including the *black vomit*. Taken into the lungs with the air, this poison enters the blood directly, producing disease according to the quantity received and the nature of the poison. Where vegetable decay predominates, chills and fever, malarial dysentery, neuralgia and rheumatism are chiefly produced.

*Lev. iv: 11, 12, 21. Lev. viii: 17. Lev. ix: 11.

Typhus and scarlet fevers, and diphtheria are fostered by the poison of animal decay, such as arises from open cesspools, foul sinks and sewers, and the accumulated dirt of over-crowded tenement houses. If we breathe the purest air into our lungs, we do not breathe it out fit for breathing again. Part of it has entered the blood to purify it, and much of what is breathed out is a gas unfit to sustain life, and loaded with animal waste from the body. So, if the air of a living room is not constantly renewed by ventilation, it is very soon impure and poisonous. In the confined holds of slave ships, many poor wretches have perished miserably by suffocation.

And where these poisons are diluted with purer air, and do not result in such violent disease and speedy death, they no less surely affect the health and slowly weaken the constitution, bringing on, especially, diseases of the organs of breathing, epidemic influenza, catarrh, and the slow but fatal consumption which is transmitted often to children and children's children. The reason this most terrible disease prevails more at the North than at the South is not nearly so much because of the direct effect of the colder climate, as from the more indoor life of the people. All good physicians now send their patients where they can live out of doors.

It may astonish you, but it is true that scientific men compute that, of all the diseases which carry off such thousands of our population every year, as many as *one-half* are *preventable diseases*: that is, diseases which might be prevented by strict attention to the laws of health. What a thought is that! I know that some of you believe that sickness is a visitation of God; sent in judgment, as you say, and that it is almost blasphemous to talk of preventing it. Moses, evidently, did not think so. It is a law of God that effect shall follow cause. Solomon said, "Can a man take fire into his bosom and

his clothes not be burned?" Would you call such burning the judgment of God? So it is—his judgment upon the disregard of natural laws, and so is every case of preventable disease his judgment, in the same way.

You say you cannot see this poison in the air. No; if you could, what dark or blood-red clouds of wrath would be seen coiling about some of our houses, pressing for entrance at every door and window. The poison is not preceptible to the unaided eye, but it usually is to the sense of smell. How does your close sleeping room smell to you after you have been out in the fresh air awhile! No man, rich or poor, should take a house that has a bad odor about it which he cannot remove. Does that house rent cheaper that has an open cesspool in the back yard, a clogged up drain, a stagnant ditch, a slaughter house or sour swamp in the neighborhood? You won't find it cheaper when you come to count in doctors' bills and sick days out of work, and, it may be, the loss of wife and child. God says to you, as Moses to the Israelites, **Be clean.**

It is well to know that the malaria of swamps may be at least much diminished, by the planting of trees and shrubs which in their growth feed upon the gases so hurtful to the human body. The Eucalyptus, or Australian blue-gum, is known to possess this absorbent power in a remarkable degree, and it is now extensively planted in California, and the other Pacific states and territories, and in the South, for this and other good qualities. It is a good timber tree, and its leaves, and an oil prepared from them, give great relief as an outward application in rheumatism. In climates too cold for the blue-gum, which will not flourish in the Atlantic states much north of South Carolina, other trees may be planted with benefit. The common sunflower, rapid of growth, cheerful and homelike in the cottage door-

yard, is one of the best natural absorbents of malaria, and will not shut out the sunshine from the house, as trees may if planted too close. Sunshine and pure air; these are Nature's purifiers. Open your doors and windows to them.

BE CLEAN IN YOUR FOOD.*

This was another of the Health Laws of Moses. You would find it curious, and perhaps amusing, to read the long lists of clean and unclean animals allowed or forbidden as food to the Israelites. The selection would seem to you sometimes very strange, though generally perfectly accountable. But this is a law which would naturally vary in operation in different countries. The locust, for example, is still eaten in the East, and perhaps is not more repulsive than our shrimp is at first sight. We need not eat it because they did. The oyster, on the other hand, which we find so good, is neither pleasant nor wholesome in the warm southern seas. And the pig, which was forbidden to the Israelites, is, even in this country to some extent, though less than in theirs, infested with a little worm, of microscopic size, the living germ of which, taken into the human body, develops in the muscles, and produces very painful and often fatal disease. This disease is quite common in Germany, where much raw or partly cooked pork is eaten; it is not unknown in this country, and has, no doubt, often occurred unrecognized. You need not give up your pigs, but be careful to keep them from eating carrion and vermin—rats especially, which are themselves infested with the *trichine*. To make yourselves perfectly safe, be sure always to cook your pork thoroughly—through and through—parboiling it before frying; thus killing the living germs, if any exist. But a whole book

* Lev. vii: 18, 19, 21. Lev. xi: 2-23. Lev. xxii: 8. Deut. xiv: 3-20.

could be written about proper food, and we hope to give you other pamphlets upon this important subject.

BE CLEAN IN YOUR PERSONAL HABITS; CLEAN IN LIFE
AND MORALS.*

This was one of the Health Laws of Moses, a most important one.

There is in Rome a famous statue, a colossal group representing a father and his two sons in the coils of huge serpents. As I looked upon it, it seemed to me a terrible allegory of the power of evil habit. The strong man is stung to death, and though every muscle is strained to resist the crushing folds, while he strives to strangle the monster and tear it from him, you see that the struggle is hopeless. The weaker, younger lad is also evidently doomed, but the elder, in the full strength of young manhood, and with fewer coils about him, may even yet escape. So do evil habits hold, and crush, and sting their victims. It is the first stealthy coil we must fear, or another and another glides around us, and then how terrible the struggle which is the price of life. Weakness and repulsive disease, transmitted from generation to generation, are the terrible natural consequences of breaking God's law of cleanness of life.

There are some diseases, you know, which can be communicated from one person to another by personal contact; they are "catching," we say. A very dreadful and contagious one prevailed among the Israelites, brought with them from Egypt, the terrible curse upon sin and uncleanness, the leprosy, happily unknown as yet among us. By the laws of Moses, all cases of this infectious disease were to be strictly secluded. The patient was to be treated outside the camp, and not to return till pronounced cured, by the priest. The garments,

* Ex. xx: 14. Lev. xv. Lev. xviii. Deut. xxiii: 10, &c.

furniture, or house, infected with contagion, or other unwholesome decay common in that climate, were to be carefully purified, or, if need be, destroyed. Thus every precaution was taken against the spread of disease.

BE CLEAN FROM CONTAGION.*

Much preventable sickness is now caused by the neglect of this law. I have known a lady to take the small pox from a conveyance in which she travelled. Deaths have been known to result from riding in street cabs which had not been cleaned after carrying patients to the hospital. The following striking case came under my personal knowledge. Among a company of young people, boarding together in a city, under the care of an instructor, one young girl was suddenly prostrated with diphtheria. She had been apparently in perfect health, and the boarding house was comfortable and apparently well kept and well situated. Careful inquiry, however, drew forth the fact that a previous visitor at the house had, a few weeks before, suffered from the same disease, probably brought from elsewhere, and had occupied *the same bed* which had not been properly cleaned. By help of the physician's orders, the infected bed and bedstead were removed from the house, the room thoroughly cleaned and disinfected, and none of the other inmates had the disease.

The sick girl was removed to a well cleaned upper room, having, fortunately, two sunny windows and an open fire, which is one of the best possible means of ventilation, with an adjoining room for the nurse. Nothing unclean was allowed to remain in the room. The patient's clothing and bedding, sheets, blankets and pillow-cases, were used one twenty-four hours and aired the next, a double supply of everything being kept for

*Lev. xlii: 45, &c. Lev. xiv.

the purpose. This was not accomplished without much impatience and remonstrance on the part of the house-keeper, who said it would kill the girl, and that she knew, for she had nursed a patient through twelve weeks of typhus fever, without once changing a rag he had on. The struggle for cleanness was rewarded by a very unusually rapid and complete recovery, with no lingering after effects of weakness or unsoundness, though the case was a well marked and threatening one at the beginning. There are some cases of acute lung trouble where it may be necessary to take the greatest care in changing the garments, and the least cold taken would turn the balance of life and death. In serious cases like this, you should always try to get the advice of a good physician.

In your small or crowded houses, it may be hard to secure this perfection of seclusion and comfort for the sick, but you should do your best for it, especially in the case of contagious disease. You will find it easier to take good care of one than to have a whole family sick on your hands, and you will be far less likely to take the disease yourself. You owe it to your neighbors too, not to spread it among them. If you live in a city, it is your duty to notify a physician at once, and to willingly submit to his orders to have the patient removed, if necessary, to a hospital where he can be properly and safely cared for. If you live in the country where no such provision is made, it is equally your duty to notify a good physician and follow his orders. Keep the children, especially, out of the way, out of doors in the pure air, just as much as possible.

I have said you should get the advice of a good physician. You will perhaps be surprised to find that the Health Laws of Moses absolutely forbade the practice and employment of conjuration, the various supersti-

tious and false ways used by so many quack doctors.*

BE NOT SUPERSTITIOUS.

So strict was this law that they were commanded to put such to death. The misunderstanding and misapplication of this law of Moses, something less than two hundred years ago in New England, produced a great deal of excitement and trouble, and many innocent persons were cruelly put to death as witches. It may not be well for us to carry out the full rigors of the Mosaic penalties, but if any one but an intentional murderer could deserve death of human law, it would be one who for money, basely takes advantage of the needs of his suffering fellow-men, and risks their health and life by pretending to powers which he knows he does not possess; takes advantage of the agony of anxiety which is eager to try anything for the relief of some dear friend, and wastes the last chance, it may be, of trying anything with success, all to make money by selling his worse than worthless nostrums.

God's curse of death is as inexorably attached to these false practices now, as it ever was. In the beautiful islands of the Pacific, a whole nation is fading out of existence, at the rate of a thousand more deaths than births every year, and all physicians and intelligent persons there are agreed that one of the two great causes of its decay is the popular belief in this very "conjunction" and witch-doctor's drugs. Nor is this kind of superstition confined to the Sandwich Islands, or to any one part of our own country. The number of advertisements of quack-doctors, "seventh sons of seventh sons," "mediums," "clairvoyants," and the whole race of such cheats, is evidence enough, and sad enough, of the wide extent of ignorance and superstition.

* Lev. xix; 31. xx; 6. Deut. xviii: 10, 12.

Would you trust your watch or clock, when it needs repairing, to the hands of a man who had never seen the works of one, and did not know one wheel from another? Far more complex and delicate is the wonderful mechanism of this human body, and of vastly more importance to us. Only the careful study of years, with all the aids of an intelligent mind and scientific education, can qualify any one to treat its maladies. But a little more knowledge generally diffused among the people, such as all school teachers should prepare themselves to give, would be enough to convince them of the need of taking care of their bodies and trusting them in sickness only to competent hands. Trust God who made your bodies, and the intelligent physicians who have made His laws of nature their study, and let the conjurer and quack doctor alone, as Moses commanded his people to. Be not superstitious.

BE TEMPERATE.*

This was another of his Health Laws. They were, in detail and application, adapted to the needs of the people at the time they were given, and total abstinence, when every man had his own vineyard and could drink the pure juice of the grape, was not urged then as it afterwards was by King Solomon, when the serpent of drunkenness had been found in the cup. Yet even from the beginning, Moses charged the Levites, who were the priests and teachers of the people, to drink no wine or strong drink when they went into the tabernacle, "that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between clean and unclean, and that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the Lord hath spoken unto them by the hand of Moses."

*Lev. x: 8-10. Deut. xxix: 6.

And at the end of their wanderings, he called the attention of the whole people to this fact as a message from God—"I have led you forty years in the wilderness; ye have not eaten bread, neither have ye drunk wine nor strong drink." The bread had been supplied by manna, which seemed to contain all its properties of nourishment, but instead of wine, God gave them water. A grand object lesson on the purer life, it was for them, and us. The "streams in the wilderness" which gushed forth from the smitten rock, were of pure and living water, as much within our reach now, as then within theirs. With it, we too can live without wine or strong drink, **and live a higher, purer life.**

There is another significant fact to observe here. When we know that it is a well acknowledged fact, proved by countless statistics of prisons and poorhouses, that every year, one hundred thousand criminals and eight hundred thousand paupers are made by intemperance in the United States, we can see how long a drunkard could have escaped the strict penalties of the moral and social laws of Moses. A man who gives himself up to habits of intoxication cannot fulfil the law of love to his neighbor, in his house or in society.

That the law of temperance is a health law, is clearly evident. A drinking man has less chance for his life when disease or accident befalls him, than a temperate man whose blood is pure from the poison of alcohol. This is a fact acknowledged by all medical men, and acted upon by all life-insurance companies. A drunkard's life is full of pains and bodily torment; a drunkard's grave is generally an early grave. And the worst of it is that he transmits his weakness to his children, and often to the third and fourth generation. When they fail to manifest his love for drink, they are most likely, as every good physician will tell you, to be puny and

sickly; scrofulous, rickety, or consumptive. Sometimes the brain is affected; the history of insane asylums shows that the dread inheritance of the drunkard's child is often insanity or idiocy. The thought of what he is preparing for his innocent children ought to be enough to make a young man sign the pledge and keep it.

Another grand Health Law of Moses is one which was ordained long before the ten commandments were given: at the creation of the world; the law of Sabbath rest.

“REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY—

IN IT THOU SHALT NOT DO ANY WORK.”*

We will look at it here simply as a health law, apart from the religious blessings of a day devoted in a special way to the worship of God.

This strong but delicate machine, the body, cannot stand the strain of perpetual motion any more than any other machine can. It needs rest, and the repair which Nature carries on during rest and sleep. The regular sleep of the night is very important, but even this is not enough. And now, between the needs of the working man and the demands of labor and selfish gain, comes the blessed rest of the Sabbath. It is the working-man's gift from God, one of the rights of his divine Magna Charta, and if he knew its value, he would not willingly give it up. It was mercifully extended to the animal creation; the Israelites were commanded to let their animals of labor rest upon that day, showing thus evidently that it is a physical as well as a moral law.

As to the manner of employing Sunday, I will not say much here; only, that rest need not be always total inaction. A change of employment is often the best kind of rest, and intellectual activity may healthfully follow bodily labor. A laboring man has well said that “the

* Ex. xx: 8-11.—xvi: 23.—xxiii: 12.—xxxv: 3.

Sabbath comes to give rest to matter and liberty to mind." In general, whatever continues the strain of the week's work, whether physical or mental, is not Sabbath rest, the need of which is now generally acknowledged by merely scientific as well as religious men. France, after the revolution of 1791, under a government which disavowed all religion, tried to show the world that it could do without this Health Law of the Bible, and set apart instead, every tenth day as a day of rest and amusement. Neither man nor beast could bear the strain of nine days of work and one of revelry, and the country had to go back to the law of one day's rest in seven. It is the health law of God in nature.

The Israelites were accustomed to prepare for the Sabbath by cleansing their houses, clothes and persons. This is also the physical preparation for the Christian Sabbath, and is one of the ways in which it is beneficial, coming regularly to remind the family of all the blessings of health, order and decency, and giving a tone of thrift and comfort to the whole week. Well spent Sabbaths of rest are great safeguards of family life, and health, and civilization.

"SIX DAYS SHALT THOU LABOR." *

Work is as much a Health Law as Rest. It may be a new idea to you that the Fourth Commandment is not only to remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy, but to work six days and work industriously—"Do *all* your work." Indeed the Sabbath belongs to the working man. Nobody deserves its rest who does not work in the place God puts him, with hands or brain. Riches only set him free to work for the world instead of for himself.

That work is healthful for mind and body, is a fact no longer doubtful. I have before me, as I write, the

* Ex. xx; 9.

report of one of the largest Insane asylums in this country, and here, in its statistics of the condition in life of those admitted from the beginning, I find that the third highest source of supply, out of twelve classes of people, is that of the unemployed.

Occasional holidays, thanksgivings, and days commemorative of national events, were enjoined upon the Israelites, and careful directions given for their proper and orderly observance, but, apart from these, there were six working days in the week. So there are still, and no man can expect to lay up a store for old age and his children, or to accomplish much in the world, who shirks any of them. The necessity of earning our bread by the sweat of the brow was laid upon man as a penalty, but, rightly submitted to, it becomes a blessing, bringing with it all the comforts of home, and freedom and health of body and mind. The sleep of the laboring man is sweet.

Frederika Bremer, a Swedish writer, tells a pretty story of a peasant couple who, falling into idle ways, were alarmed by seeing a great iron hand stretch through the door of their little cabin, and snatch away one after another of their possessions, furniture, clothes and food, till at last only the bare floor and walls were left, and they began in terror to work again for something to eat, when gradually, all the things they had lost were brought back one by one, and set down in their place by a soft, quiet hand, until everything was restored, and still more was brought. You will easily see that the iron hand was the hand of Idleness, the giving hand, the hand of Industry. If you have felt the stern grasp of the iron hand already on your possessions, be warned in time.

There is no such hard work as laziness. Honest labor, with regular rest, hurts no one, but is honorable and healthful to all. It sends the blood coursing healthily through the veins, strengthens the muscles, gives sweet

sleep, good appetite, an easy conscience, and a happy heart.

There were other laws of Moses, not so strictly health laws, but calculated to bring prosperity and peace. Economy, hospitality, generous provision for the honest poor, proper cultivation of the soil, planting of trees, and provision against the exhaustion of the land by over-cultivation; all these were enjoined by the great Law-giver. They were God's laws for the people, and, with varied adaptation to our altered circumstances, are just as good and binding now.

The curse pronounced against the Israelites, if they did not obey the Health Laws, is very striking, and every Sanitary Commission, and man of scientific knowledge of such matters, would acknowledge that it is still in full force.

This was it:

“If ye shall despise my statutes and break my covenant, I also will do this unto you; I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and the burning ague that shall consume the eyes and cause sorrow of heart; your land shall not yield her increase, neither shall the trees of the land yield their fruit. When ye are gathered together in your cities, I will send the pestilence among you, and I will make your cities waste, and I will bring the land into desolation.” *

Do you shrink with horror from these judgments, and from all the disgusting details of the sins against nature which lead to them, upon which we have been so long dwelling? Then turn from them to the opposite picture of homes well ordered, and full of health and happiness.

All over this land are now going up new homes on which depends the future prosperity or disaster of our nation. Young men and women who are building these

* Lev. xxvi 14-32.

homes: resolve to make them the abodes of temperance, and purity and peace. Let them be, however humble, such as the little home in Bethany, where you can ask the Master to enter. The soldier is careful to keep his quarters ready for military inspection, but Moses told the Israelites, "The Lord thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp to deliver thee; therefore shall thy camp be holy: that He see no unclean thing in thee, and turn away from thee."*

You have heard the curse pronounced upon disobedience of the Health Laws. Now listen to the blessing that still follows obedience.

"If ye hearken to these judgments, and keep and do them, thou shalt be blessed above all people, and the Lord will take away from thee all sickness, and will put none of the evil diseases which thou knowest upon thee." †

* Deut. xxiii: 14.

† Deut. vii: 12-15.

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At a meeting of the Executive Committee of the American Social Science Association, held June 8th, 1878, Prof. Pierce in the chair, it was unanimously voted, as follows:

Resolved, That the American Social Science Association learns with pleasure of the work undertaken at Hampton, in Virginia, to spread among the people of Virginia, and of the South in general, a knowledge of Sanitary Science popularly set forth; and that from an examination of the three Sanitary Tracts of the proposed series, viz.: *The Health Laws of Moses*, *The Duty of Teachers*, and *Preventable Diseases*, the Executive Committee of this Association is persuaded that the important work, thus undertaken, will be well performed. We would therefore commend these Tracts to all readers, at the North as well as at the South, and would recommend their wide distribution in the way best suited to promote the circulation of them.

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